

## ADMIRAL FLETCHER VERIFIES TRIBUNE'S NAVY DISCLOSURES

Tells House Committee of Lack of Submarines for Atlantic, Slighting of Fleet Drill and Shortage of Men.

### VERBATIM REPORT OF HIS TESTIMONY

Asks To Be Excused from Comment on Keeping of Eighteen Battleships at Vera Cruz—Knows of No Definite Defence Plan.

### ONE SUBMARINE FOR THE ATLANTIC COAST

Speaking to the House Naval Committee, Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher admitted yesterday:  
That there was only one submarine in active service on the Atlantic Coast.  
That there is no one department directly responsible for the maintenance of submarines, and that it would take until the middle of February to put into service sufficient submarines to be reasonably effective.  
That there have been no fleet drills since the ships were first sent to Mexican waters, in February, 1913.  
That he must be excused from commenting upon the "necessity" of maintaining eighteen battleships in Mexican waters for so many months when there was no Mexican navy.  
That only eleven ships showed up at the supposed fleet drill off the Virginia Capes last month.  
That the navy is short between 4,000 and 5,000 men.

[From The Tribune Bureau.]  
Washington, Dec. 9.—Substantiating practically all of The Tribune's disclosures regarding the inefficiency of the United States Navy, the lack of submarine protection for the Atlantic Coast, the shortcomings in fleet practice, the lack of a definite naval policy and a shortage of men, Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher, commander of the Atlantic fleet, was an astounding witness before the House Naval Affairs Committee to-day.

Standing out in the unequivocal testimony of Admiral Fletcher were his admissions that there had been no fleet practice since ships were first sent to Mexican waters, early in 1913, and that there was only one submarine on the Atlantic Coast in fighting trim. These facts were published recently in The Tribune.

As it adjourned late to-day, the committee decided to call as a witness Commander Yeates Sterling, in charge of the submarine flotilla, who will be questioned regarding the unprepared condition of under-surface vessels.

Copies of recent issues of The Tribune were conspicuous about the committee room to-day, and members took turns in asking Admiral Fletcher about the exposures. Secretary Daniels, who will be heard to-morrow, will undergo a similar grilling.

Nation-wide criticism of the navy and its administration was largely responsible for the committee's decision to permit publicity of its hearings. An epitome of Admiral Fletcher's statements and admissions is as follows:

"We have not been able to get together sixteen battleships for fleet exercises since ships were first sent to Mexico.

"It is true that only eleven ships met for fleet drill off the Virginia Capes last month. The flagships arrived there first, but the remaining six showed up about the time I expected them.

#### One Submarine Ready for Action.

"Yes, it is true that there is only one submarine in first class condition on the Atlantic Coast. Others are undergoing repairs or overhauling, but they will be ready soon. It just happens that most of them are under repairs now. It is not a regular performance.

"We need between four and five thousand men to man the navy to its full fighting strength.

"I must ask to be excused from commenting on the necessity for keeping eighteen battleships at Vera Cruz while the port was occupied by our soldiers and there was no Mexican navy to fight. [This in answer to a question put in that form.]

"Our ships have had individual target practice and division maneuvers, but since their separation incident to the situation in Mexican and West Indian waters we have not assembled sixteen vessels for fleet exercises.

"On account of this loss of time we intend to have a drill period in January before the vessels start on their cruise through the Panama Canal.

"We could not successfully defend ourselves against the navy of England if she sent out her entire fleet. If she sent 50 per cent of her ships it would be a pretty close fight.

"I think England is the only navy against whom we could not make a successful defence.

"We must keep building ships, I should say, as long as other nations continue building and until an international disarmament is signed.

"The submarine is a weapon of opportunity. The battleship remains the chief factor in deciding naval conflicts.

"If one ship in our fleet has recently had five calls to collision quarters (as The Tribune article states), I have not been advised of it."

#### Tribune Articles in Record.

Much of the five hours Admiral Fletcher spent on the stand was devoted to a discussion of Tribune articles, extracts from which were put into the record. Representatives Roberts, of Massachusetts; Williams, of Illinois, and Butler and Farr, of Pennsylvania, led in the rigid cross-examination of Admiral Fletcher, and Chairman Padgett and Representatives Bathrick and Gray occasionally took a hand.

Taking from a portfolio a copy of The Tribune of December 5, Representative Roberts read an article claiming that of the seventeen submarines on the Atlantic Coast only one was in fighting trim. At the outset Admiral Fletcher said the statement was "not correct," but when pinned down by Mr. Roberts, who checked off the submarines, their locations and conditions, one by one, the admiral figured that only one vessel was in condition for active work. After reading The Tribune article, the following colloquy occurred between Representative Roberts and Admiral Fletcher:

Mr. Roberts—Now, continuing, the article I have referred to says: "The strength of the submarine fleet, built and building, is about forty-five submarines. Of these only seventeen are now on the active list on the Atlantic Coast. Of these, five have just had new batteries installed and are at target practice in the Canal Zone." Is that statement correct so far?

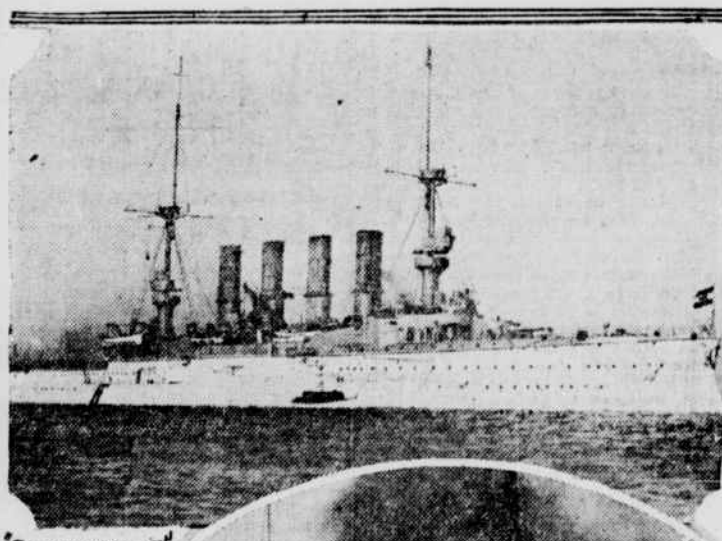
Admiral Fletcher—It is correct.

Mr. Roberts—If there are seventeen on the active list, and five in the Canal Zone, that would leave twelve. The article continues:

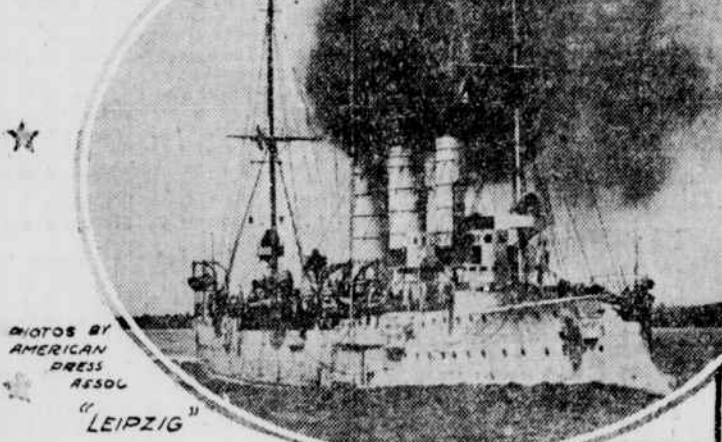
"Of the others on this coast, four are at the Norfolk yard, under-

# British Sink Three German Cruisers in Battle Off Falkland Islands; the Nurnberg and the Dresden Escape

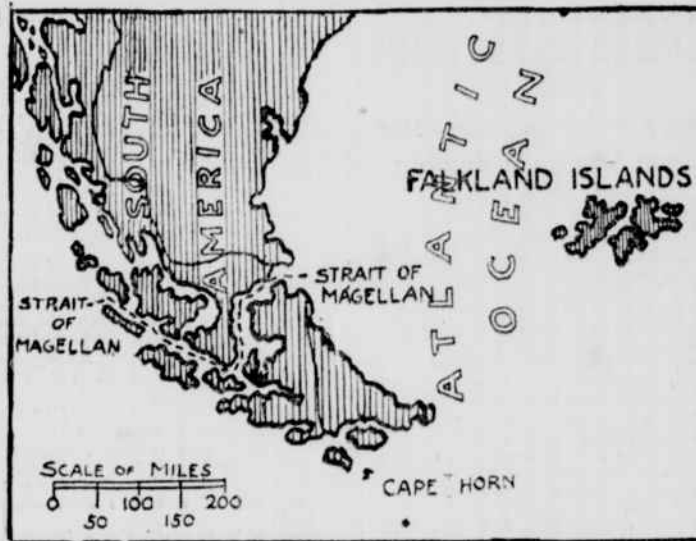
WHERE GERMAN WARSHIPS FOUGHT THEIR LAST FIGHT.



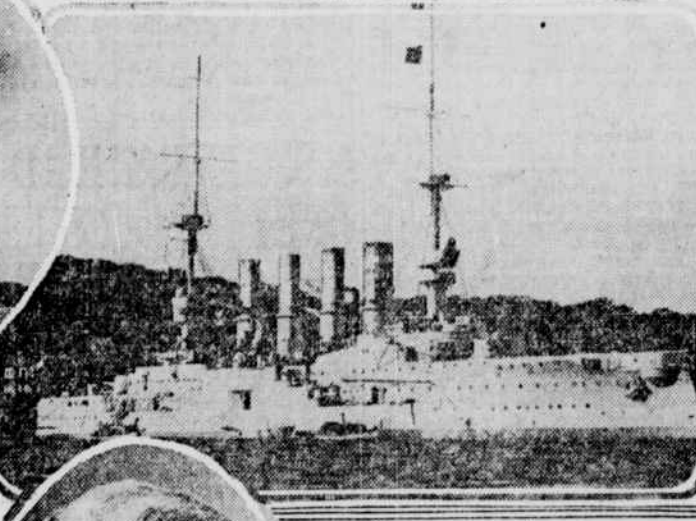
"SCHARNHORST"



"LEIPZIG"



WHERE THE THREE GERMAN SHIPS WERE SUNK.



"GNEISENAU"

## CONSUMPTION QUACKS GARNER MILLIONS YEARLY

Victims in New York City  
Alone Pay \$1,000,000 for  
Fake Nostrums.

### UNWARY DUPED BY SO-CALLED CURES

Methods by Which Venders Push  
Their Alleged Remedies  
Bared by Tribune.

For those quacks who advertise to cure consumption and also for the benefit of those who have been victimized by this vilest of patent medicine swindles, are printed these figures from the records of the New York State Department of Health:  
One million five hundred thousand die of tuberculosis annually throughout the world; 100,000 die of the disease in the United States yearly; 14,500 die of consumption in New York State each year.

It has been conservatively estimated that the makers of these quack consumption cures in the United States alone swindle the sufferers of the disease who fall into their hands out of \$15,000,000 annually. New York City pays these quacks, where their harvest is richest, \$1,000,000 at least.

The honest opinion among medical practitioners and those who have given the study of tuberculosis their entire time is that there is no such thing as a "consumption cure," and that all patent medicine venders who offer to cure the disease with their nostrums are swindlers.

Here is what the United States government, through its Public Health Service, an organization including some of the ablest men in the world of medicine and surgery, has to say about tuberculosis and "cures" for the disease:  
"There is no drug known, however rare or expensive it may be, that has any curative action in the disease (consumption), and all remedies advertised as such are to be avoided. Patent medicines are harmful; radium, the X-ray, or electricity in any of its various forms have no value in tuberculosis of the lungs. No serum has yet been found that will cure it; there is no plaster or poultice that has any effect on the disease itself."

#### No Cure Yet Found.

In fact, the only known cure for consumption is the combination of rest, fresh air and good food, under the direction of a competent doctor.

Yet, despite all these facts and figures, which are known to the average physician, and which in one way or another have reached the ears of the average consumptive, the quacks go on.

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VICE ADMIRAL SIR FREDERICK STURDEE, OF THE BRITISH SQUADRON.



ADMIRAL COUNT VON SPEE, OF THE GERMAN FLEET.

## KAISER ILL WITH PNEUMONIA; IS NOW VERY WEAK

Gets Report of Military  
Situation While Con-  
fined to Bed.

### HIS FEVER SHOWS NO SIGN OF DECREASING

Bulletin Says That He Is  
Unable to Give Any  
Instructions.

London, Dec. 10.—An Exchange Telegraph dispatch from Amsterdam says:  
"The latest bulletin issued in Berlin says that Emperor William's condition is unchanged, and he has been unable to leave his bed. His fever has not decreased.

"The Emperor received a report of the military situation, but was too weak to give any instructions."

From dispatches received here during the night it appears that Emperor William was seized with an attack of influenza while on a secret visit to Emperor Francis Joseph. The most reliable sources of information by way of Holland and Copenhagen indicate that he is now making progress toward recovery.

It is noted that the Emperor's quiet and unaltered arrival at Berlin last Thursday night as a sick man threatened with nervous breakdown was his first visit to the capital since the beginning of the war. The German newspapers of Friday, Saturday and Sunday, which have just arrived here, make no mention of his name beyond the brief announcement that the Emperor has returned to Berlin. This apparently indicates that the news of his illness was suppressed until danger was past.

One correspondent declares that the Emperor's illness is mainly of a psychological character, due to the strain of the last few months, and not to reports from the German army headquarters in the field regarding the war situation.

London, Dec. 9.—Emperor William is suffering from pneumonia, which is combined with nervous depression due to overexertion, according to telegrams from Berlin forwarded by the Amsterdam correspondent of the Exchange Telegraph Company. The messages add that the German Emperor's doctors have advised him not to return to the front.

A Berlin telegram forwarded from Amsterdam by the correspondent of Reuter's Telegram Company says that Emperor William is still ill. He remained in bed to-day, but was able to listen to reports from the German army headquarters in the field regarding the war situation.

London, Dec. 10.—A report of the Kaiser's death gained currency in London last night, and was posted up in several theatres.

## FIRE DESTROYS EDISON'S PLANT; LOSS \$7,000,000

Wizard Leads Firemen in  
Saving Patents and  
Inventions.

### FIRE DRILLS SAVE LIVES OF EMPLOYEES

Flames Sweep Away Concrete Buildings—Inventor to Start Again.

[By Telegraph to The Tribune.]  
West Orange, N. J., Dec. 9.—Flames, starting from an exploding motion picture film in the inspection building, to-night wiped out the greater part of the Edison Company's plant here, caused a loss of \$7,000,000, threw 7,000 men and women out of employment and all but destroyed the famous laboratories where the costly patents and inventions of Thomas A. Edison were stored. A mutual insurance of \$2,000,000 reduces the loss.

Of the fifteen concrete and supposed fireproof buildings which made up one block of the gigantic plant, eleven were swept away by the flames as easily as if they had been of wood. Chemical explosions added the sweep of the fire and caused fears that many employees who worked late had been trapped in the flames, but perfect fire drills aided their escape and none of them was injured.

Mr. Edison, summoned from his home in Llewellyn Park, coolly directed his employees and the firemen in the task of saving the laboratory building. Its location, some distance from the burning buildings, and the fact that the wind was blowing away from it helped to save it. The greater part of its valuable contents were taken to safety by hundreds of employees.

The laboratory saved, Mr. Edison

## 2 DIE; 100 HURT IN 'L' WRECK; CARS FIRETRAPS

Trains Crash at 116th St.;  
Motorman at Wrong  
Post, Hint Probers.

### PASSENGERS FIGHT TO ESCAPE BLAZE

Panic in Midair—Women Injured—Third Rail Causes Flames.

A northbound Ninth av. local elevated train crashed into an express at the 116th st. station last night, killing two men and injuring the police estimate, more than one hundred persons. One of these is fatally hurt.

Evidence was obtained at an early hour this morning by Assistant District Attorneys Murphy and Breckinridge that the wreck occurred because the motorman of the local was operating his train from the second car instead of the first.

The collision, telescoping the rear car of the express and the first car of the local, ripped up the third rail and short circuited the powerful current into the wooden vehicles, which caught fire at once. While the firemen were fighting the blaze the flames leaped from the burning cars to a switchhouse at the south end of the platform and destroyed it.

#### THE DEAD.

MUNICH, Gottlieb, twenty-seven years old, 215 West 116th st.  
COLLINS, Joseph, guard, body unclaimed.

#### THE INJURED.

KNICKERBOCKER HOSPITAL  
ABBOTT, Ben, 812 West 123d st.; lacerations of head and body.  
CLEMENS, Patrick, 5 Manhattan st.; lacerations of body and hands.  
MURRAY, Celia, 15 Manhattan st.; shock and abrasions.  
HALPIN, Katherine, 214 West 117th st.; lacerations of head and face.

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Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Leipzig Sent  
to Bottom—Total Loss of Life May  
Be Not Far from 2,000 Men.

### CHASE BEGINS FOR FLEEING SHIPS

Admiral Count von Spee Believed to Have Gone  
Down with Flagship—Two Colliers  
Captured.

London, Dec. 9.—A British squadron under command of Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Sturdee, chief of the war staff, engaged a German squadron under Admiral Count von Spee off the Falkland Islands, in the South Atlantic, yesterday, and won a victory which is being acclaimed throughout England.

The armored cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau, and the protected cruiser Leipzig, three of the German warships which had been menacing British shipping, and part of the squadron which sank the British cruisers Good Hope and Monmouth in the Pacific on November 1, were destroyed, while the cruisers Dresden and Nurnberg, the two other vessels which composed the German squadron, made off during the fight, and, according to latest accounts, are being pursued. Two colliers were captured.

#### ADMIRALTY ANNOUNCES ENGAGEMENT.

The announcement of this engagement and victory, which was the most important naval engagement of the war with the exception of that off Heligoland last August, was made this evening in the following statement given out by the Admiralty:

"At 7:30 a. m. on the 8th of December the Scharnhorst, the Gneisenau, the Nurnberg, the Leipzig and the Dresden were sighted near the Falkland Islands by a British squadron under Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Sturdee.

"An action followed, in the course of which the Scharnhorst, flying the flag of Admiral Count von Spee; the Gneisenau and the Leipzig were sunk. The Dresden and the Nurnberg made off during the action and are being pursued.

"Two colliers also were captured.  
"The vice-admiral reports that the British casualties are very few in number.

"Some survivors have been rescued from the Gneisenau and the Leipzig."

#### SOME SURVIVORS RESCUED.

The statement makes reference to some survivors rescued from the Gneisenau and the Leipzig, but no mention is made of any of the crew of the Scharnhorst, which was the flagship of the German admiral, being saved, and it is thus presumed that Count von Spee, his officers and men went down fighting.

The British casualties were light, but beyond the fact that the British squadron was commanded by Vice-Admiral Sturdee no information is vouchsafed regarding the ships engaged, and the newspapers are enjoined not to speculate, as "other combinations may be effected."

The greatest enthusiasm prevailed in London over the victory, and the general impression is that it will be completed, as the Admiralty would not be likely to send ships that could not overtake the Dresden and the Nurnberg, which are 24-knot and 23-knot vessels, respectively, and probably even slower after their long service. They are at a disadvantage also because of their small coal capacity.

#### HEADS FORMIDABLE SQUADRON.

The British squadron which engaged the Germans left England without the knowledge of the general public, and until his name was mentioned it was believed that Vice-Admiral Sturdee was serving in home waters. The fact that he was taken from the post of chief of the war staff is indicative of the determination of the British government to clear the Pacific and South Atlantic of all the German warships, and it is therefore believed that the British commander is at the head of a formidable squadron.

In addition to the Dresden and the Nurnberg, only one German warship—the Karlsruhe—is now unaccounted for in those waters, although there may be one or two armed merchantmen which the Allies have not rounded up.

As the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau each carried a complement of 765 men, the Leipzig 286, the Nurnberg 322 and the Dresden 261, the total German loss is estimated at not far from 2,000 men, although the actual losses to the Dresden and the Nurnberg cannot yet be known.

Ever since the engagement off the Chilean coast on November 1 between the British ships under Admiral Crodock and the German vessels under Admiral von Spee, during which the British armored cruisers Monmouth and Good Hope were sent to the bottom, with the loss of the British admiral and 1,500 men, war vessels of the British and Japanese navies have been looking for the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Leipzig.

It was generally believed that after their victory on the Pacific the Scharnhorst, the Gneisenau, the Leipzig, the Nurnberg and the Dresden were heading south for the Strait of Magellan and ultimately would turn north to be joined by the cruiser Karlsruhe, the converted cruiser Kronprinz Wilhelm and other scout vessels that had been either captured from the merchant trade of the enemy or had been sent out by Germany to augment the Kaiser's vessels preying on trade in the North and South Atlantic.

#### CAPTURE OF LINERS PLANNED.

It was thought that this plan of mobilization had been ordered as part of a general scheme to advance on the transatlantic lanes and capture some of the big merchant prizes of French and British nationality that had been steaming back and forth between New York and Europe with impunity ever since the war began.

The armored cruisers Gneisenau and Scharnhorst were two of the German Empire's finest sea rovers. Both vessels were alike in armament and general dimensions. The Gneisenau is described as being a vessel of 11,420 tons displacement, with a beam of 70 feet and a depth of 24 feet. She had twin screws, which, driven by engines of 28,800 horsepower, propelled her at a speed of 23.8 knots, which is faster than the White Star liner Olympic and equivalent to the average speed of the Lusitania and Mauretania, of the Cunard Line. The Gneisenau was launched in the Weser in 1906 and was ready for service in 1908. She carried a crew of 735 men and was equipped with eight 8.2-inch guns, six 5.9-inch guns, twenty 3.4-inch guns and fourteen guns of smaller calibre. She was fitted with four torpedo tubes and was protected by 6-inch armor plate.

The Scharnhorst, which was built at the yards of Blohm & Voss, at Hamburg, was designed to make a speed of 22.5 knots.

The Leipzig, which had a displacement of 3,200 tons, was 341 feet long, with a beam of 43 feet and a depth of 16. She was built at Bremen and launched in the Weser in 1905 and put into commission in 1906. She